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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Statement on Azana Salon & Spa Shootings

Our hearts go out to the family, friends and community of the victims of Sunday's shooting at the Azana Salon & Spa in Brookfield. We hope for a quick recovery for those victims who are currently recovering from this terrifying event.

The shooting serves as a tragic reminder that violence may escalate when a battered woman leaves an abusive relationship or seeks legal intervention to make the violence stop. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, over one-third of women murdered throughout the country are killed by an intimate partner – an average of 1,200 a year or three victims per day. The reported shooter in the Brookfield tragedy had been served with a domestic abuse injunction less than a week ago.

Not only does this tragic situation underscore the importance of safety planning for those hoping to leave an abusive relationship, it also emphasizes the need for a change in our perceptions of domestic violence. Too often we hear the term "crime of passion" after a domestic violence related homicide or vicious assault. The impression is that the acts of violence are caused because of the abuser's great love for the victim and that he or she just "snapped" in response to their current situation. But, as Gloria Steinem said, and those of us in the field well know – "These are not crimes of passion, only crimes of possession." These acts are assertions of power and control, and they typically follow a long pattern of controlling behavior and escalating violence.

Domestic violence occurs in every city, town and village among persons of all age ranges, ethnic backgrounds, and economic levels. We must be willing to reach out to family, friends or coworkers anytime we believe that they may be victims of abuse – even if that means calling 911 if you suspect imminent danger.

Our entire community, including business and civic officials, faith leaders, health care workers, educators, criminal justice providers, media representatives, neighborhood and social service organizations must recognize this insidious and dangerous behavior and step forward to break the cycle of violence.

Resources are available in Milwaukee and throughout Wisconsin for victims, individuals and organizations who want to address a suspected domestic abuse situation, as well as those who may be concerned about hurting someone they love. Help is available through:

Commission on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault (information & referral)
Sojourner Family Peace Center 24-Hour Hotline

(414) 286-2997
(414) 933-2722

Think Health. Act Now!

Hmong & Spanish Language
Hmong Domestic Violence Hotline
Latina Resource Center

(877) 740-4292
(414) 389-6510

For program information outside of Milwaukee County
Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Domestic Violence Hotline

www.wcadv.org/gethelp
(800) 799-SAFE

The City of Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was established by city ordinance in 1979, and is charged with increasing safety for all victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and holding abusers accountable. Commissioners include leaders representing mainstream and underserved populations including law enforcement, social service providers, health care, education, faith community, LGBT organizations, youth agencies, legal services and others. The work of the Commission includes: training for law enforcement, health care providers, educators and other professionals in the areas of domestic violence and sexual assault; consultation with public and private agencies to improve their response to victims and survivors; advocacy for public policy that improves victim safety and abuser accountability, and community awareness efforts aimed at intervention and prevention.

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